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the general trend. The same trend is, finally, evident in the Nupe method of keeping sheep and goats.

Sheep and Goats

Very rarely do the Nupe farmers (or town people for that matter) breed sheep and goats. It is, once more, the principle of 'liquid' resources that counts. A great many farmers buy a sheep or goat when it is young, or when sheep and goats are cheap, and sell it again later on with profit, when they are in need of money. Certain regular fluctuations in the price of goats form the basis for this calculation. During the season of the great Mohammedan feasts, when rams are killed in almost every house, prices go up, to fall again during the rainy season, before the harvest, when there is little money coming in and accordingly little demand for animals.¹ This method of husbandry accounts for the very irregular distribution of sheep and goats at a given time, varying greatly with the individual need for money and the ability or inclination to invest money in animals. The general figures *per capita* of sheep and goats are surprisingly low (see the statistical table). The figure for Bida town is 0.12 and for the districts 0.71 per male adult. These figures reflect the very small money resources the Nupe have for engaging in this sort of seasonal trade. Throughout the year, and especially during the time of the Mohammedan festivals, a large number of sheep and goats have, in fact, to be imported from Hausa. But the figures also show that sheep- and goat-keeping is more frequent in the districts than in Bida. This bears out what I have said above about the influence of varied and expanding economic enterprise upon stock-keeping. Bida, though richer than the districts, is poorer in live stock; the centre of trade and of manifold economic interests keeps its capital more liquid than the country with its limited scope of economic prospects.

It is interesting to note in this connexion that in goat- or sheep-breeding the young animals always belong to the owner of the mother-goat or -sheep; the owner of the female animal may ask the owner of the male animal to let him have the animal for breeding, but this would be done without payment or return of any kind, merely as a personal favour. Female animals are accordingly more expensive than male animals, and the inducement to part with the mother-goat thus often overweighs the interest in the breeding itself.

Other Domestic Animals

The Nupe keep no pigs and eat no pork—an avoidance which is not, as far as I see, due only to Mohammedan influence. The few pigs one sees in the country belong to Yoruba.

¹ Prices for sheep and goats vary from 5s. to 15s., according to the season (see p. 316). The great seasonal changes are also shown in the figures for sheep and goats slaughtered in Bida in the different months of the year: January, 130; February, 150; March, 82; April, 151; May, 129; June, 68; July, 58; August, 114; September, 116; October, 119; November, 120; December, 122. The highest figures refer to January/February and April, the months of the Mohammedan festivals of *Ramadan* and *Muharram*; the lowest figures to June and July, in the middle of the rains, before the first harvest of the season.

235 There is little to be said about fowls. In every house chickens are
 438 kept; men and women, grown-ups and children, have their own chicken.
 [582] Often one sees a young boy going to the market to sell 'his' chicken,
 given him by father or mother. The fowls are bought and sold regularly
 [262] in the food-markets of every larger village. Fowls represent the most
 [842] important sacrificial food of pagan (and to some extent Mohammedan)
 Nupe; almost every religious ceremony, communal as well as house-
 hold-rites, involves the killing of a fowl. Chickens are, besides, the most
 desirable food the Nupe know. Eggs are not marketed and in certain
 parts of Nupe not eaten. The Beni do not eat eggs because 'they make
 men sterile and women barren'. The Nupe also keep pigeons, for which
 they put up a bowl of water on a forked pole inside the house. Pigeons
 are not as a rule traded in the market, nor are they eaten regularly, but
 sometimes the eating of pigeons is ordered by diviners for ritual reasons.

Donkeys and Horses

231 About three-quarters of the donkeys which are found in Nupe belong
 492 to Bida town. They are transport animals owned mostly by traders,
 pack animals used in their caravans which carry palm-oil and salt from
 the river steamers up country, and bring natron down from Hausa and
 Bornu. In 1935 the only districts possessing no donkeys were those
 which have other means of transport: the riverain area, and the district
 of Mokwa through which the railway runs. Again, the largest number
 231 of horses is found in Bida. Horses, as I have said already, are a symbol
 554 of rank and status. The *Etsu* Nupe may, as a sign of his highest esteem,
 present a man with a horse. But every man who can afford it will buy
 one for himself or for his sons. A horse represents, if not the most
 profitable, the most noble expenditure or investment.

231 Yet, profitable in the narrow sense, or in the wider sense as implying
 471 enhancement of prestige—all these possibilities of investment of capital
 in live stock are determined by the amount of liquid capital available; in
 433 other words, by the volume of money in circulation. The economic
 stringency of the country which, starting from the decline in the market
 prices for native produce in 1934-5, as well as the subsequent recovery
 in 1936, is reflected clearly in the figures of the census of live stock for
 Bida Division for the last four years.

	<i>Sheep</i>	<i>Goats</i>	<i>Horses</i>	<i>Donkeys</i>
1933 . . .	5,788	28,856	1,196	111
1934 . . .	6,600	29,445	1,160	157
1935 . . .	5,010	25,876	917	137
1936 . . .	5,702	34,751	1,007	149

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MEANING AND FUTURE OF GUILD ORGANIZATION

467 In examining the different industries of Nupe we have met with co-operative organizations of widely varying degrees of closeness and intensity. The individual crafts appear in this respect as one extreme, the zero point, as it were, of this scale of intensity of co-operation. What, then, are the conditions determining the degree of closeness in productive organization? Or, more specifically: Why are certain native industries guild-organized, and others left to independent individual enterprise?

We can discover four conditions of the closeness of productive co-operation: (1) The nature of the productive technique and the measure of actual working together which it entails. In this respect the work of glass-makers and iron-ore miners must be placed at the top of the list, and the work of bead-makers or individual craftsmen at the bottom. (2) Special skill and experience involved in the productive technique. The glass makers, with their jealously guarded trade secret, again, top the list; the individual crafts represent the other extreme, of techniques which can be easily acquired by anyone. (3) The regularity of the demand for the goods produced by an industry, and thus, indirectly, its economic success. The work of glass-makers or brass-smiths presents one extreme, the work of bead-makers or weavers the other. (4) The comparative unimportance of originality and inventiveness on the part of the individual craftsman. In this respect brass-smith work shows the most 'individualistic', and blacksmith-work, the most closely integrated, form of production.¹

The balance which, in the actual case, is achieved between these four factors determines the final structure of the productive organization. The issue is, however, complicated by the fact that different factors bring about similar results. Thus both a high degree of 'individualism' (as among brass-smiths) and a low measure of economic success (as among beadworkers) tend towards a dissolution of the co-operative organization. On the other hand, we find a certain closeness of organization visible in the tendency of craftsmen to work together in the same locality and perhaps in the same workshop, when most factors are pressing towards dissolution. Thus beadworkers of different families and households still tend to share a common workshop and to live together in the same quarter although their technique of production does not necessitate actual working together, nor the economic success of their craft favour co-operation. This qualified co-operation appears to be due to the advantage of keeping in close contact with one another for the purpose of profiting from each other's experience, and of keeping abreast of fashions and new styles.

467 453 Efficiency in group production appears, then, as the main motive for co-operation on a guild scale. But while the first and third condition refer to efficiency in the narrower, technical, sense of the word, i.e. ease, speed, and economy of production, the second condition reveals a more

¹ With the weavers we find an additional motive for closeness of co-operation in the tribal and cultural unity of these alien, 'Nupe-ized', groups. We can disregard this type of co-operation, which is not limited nor peculiar to labour organization.

467 specifically social and cultural aspect. Efficiency in this sense means
 433 continuity of the craft and of craft knowledge; it means the ability to
 raise, through the medium of an hereditary, imperceptibly changing
 labour group, successive generations of craftsmen. If in these
 respects production is planned for an unchanging future, the agency
 of the third factor must expose it to the disruptive effects of time
 and change. For it may appear as if modern economic changes
 directed their most destructive attacks against this third condition
 of closeness and co-operation, which is dependence upon regular
 demand. This influence is especially visible in the gradual disappear-
 467 ance of orders from the main customer of the country, king and court.
 177 The Great *Sallah*, once the occasion for numerous orders from the
 433 court, which kept the workshops of Bida busy for weeks, is now an
 occasion for making purchases at the stores that trade in European
 goods. At the *Sallah* of 1935, the first *Sallah* of the newly installed *Etsu*,
 the traditional royal gifts of kola-nuts were sent out, not in ornamental
 brass bowls of native make, but in newly bought enamelled teapots; the
 king's bodyguard, newly equipped, wore, not Bida gowns and turbans
 or native-made straw hats, but red blankets and Trilby hats; and many
 notables who would have appeared formerly on horses with costly
 trappings and gorgeous saddle-cloths, rode in on new, shining bicycles.
 Conspicuous though the competition of European goods appears, it is
 not the only reason for the decline of Nupe craft-guilds. The very
 organization of guild-organized crafts has contributed to lowering their
 resistance to outside pressure. The inertia inherent in the rigid group-
 organization with its traditional standards of production prevents the
 craft-guild from readjusting itself to new demands with the same ease as
 the individual craftsman, who is free to change his mode of production
 and to gain success by new methods. The decision of the younger men
 among the weavers to abandon the traditional production and to turn to
 the more profitable production of cap-making, the success of the most
 'individualistic' of all crafts, brass-work, are instances of this.

435 But readjustment involves in reality two different and independent
 433 processes: adjustment to modern conditions may mean both adjustment
 in price and cost of production, and adjustment with regard to the kind
 of goods produced. A close examination of this question is of special
 interest as attempts to preserve and help native arts and crafts are to-day
 officially sponsored by the educational departments in many African
 colonies. In these attempts the second type of adjustment is frequently
 taken into account exclusively, the first being either ignored or artificially
 eliminated by turning native crafts into tourist and 'curio' industries
 which can command prices quite out of proportion to the native
 economic system. That the Nupe crafts themselves have adjusted prices
 to demands is clearly shown in the general fall in prices which has taken
 place during the last five or ten years.¹ Thus mats of the best quality
 were sold, nine to ten years ago, for 3s.; in 1934 for 9d. and 1s.; in 1936,

¹ In the two years I spent in Nupe country—two years which saw a partial economic recovery—I witnessed a corresponding slight rise in prices of native craft products.

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after a slight recovery, for 1s. 3d. Straw hats ten years ago fetched 2s. 6d. and 5s.; in 1934 8d. and 1s.; in 1936 5½d. and 1s. 3d.; embroidered gowns sold ten years ago for £5 to £6; in 1934 they could be bought for 30s. or £2. But in the attempt to lower prices Nupe guild industries cannot go beyond cutting down profits; they cannot reduce the costs of production—or else they must weaken maintenance of labour and destroy the labour organization itself. One method of reducing what we might call in a broad sense costs of production was to discontinue the payments to family heads and guild-masters, as in the case of blacksmiths and weavers; another, to reorganize production on the basis of individual paid labour, as in the case of the bead-workers. Another, to save on the upkeep of the means of production: this was the case in native iron-mining. Native iron-mining is, in fact, the most convincing instance of the limits set to the reduction in costs of production. Native iron-ore mining was, as we have seen, not destroyed by the competition of a more satisfactory raw material; nor would the price of the native product alone have been responsible for its disappearance from the market. What was responsible was the relation between a low price and a 'high cost of production' which could not be reduced. In this primary industry in the strict sense of the word costs of production equal crude labour costs, i.e. time and human energy. When low prices made it impossible for the iron-ore miners to make enough money even to ensure sufficient food supplies, cost of production had to be reduced, i.e. time and energy taken away from craft-work and devoted to agriculture. We could study the effects of these elementary attempts at reducing 'labour costs', which were forced upon the craftsmen; only one way was open to them, and that was to work their furnaces wastefully, irrespective of gradual deterioration, even to the degree of allowing them to fall into complete disrepair.

Yet it would not be true to say that the economic system of Nupe has never evolved more satisfactory methods to meet these contingencies which every economy must reckon with. I have said that formerly the Nupe craftsmen employed slave-labour on a considerable scale. Now, slave-labour provided an important mechanism to safeguard the flexibility of the economic system with regard to labour costs and profits. Slave-labour represents an investment of capital almost in the modern sense; for by investing capital in slaves one invested surplus capital in a profit-bearing concern, and the surplus made in times of prosperity could thus be made to serve as means of reducing labour-costs in times of stringency. The craftsman who bought slaves could not only use them as cheaper labour in his workshop, but could also put them to agricultural labour, to produce food for himself and his family—food which otherwise would have to be bought out of the profits made in the craft. The Nupe industries have lost the primitive form of industrial capital, slave-labour, without having yet evolved the modern substitute, machinery. They must thus fall short of the most vital necessity in industrial productive organization, its adaptability to changing demands. These conclusions must not be ignored when planning the preservation or revival of African crafts and craft-guilds.

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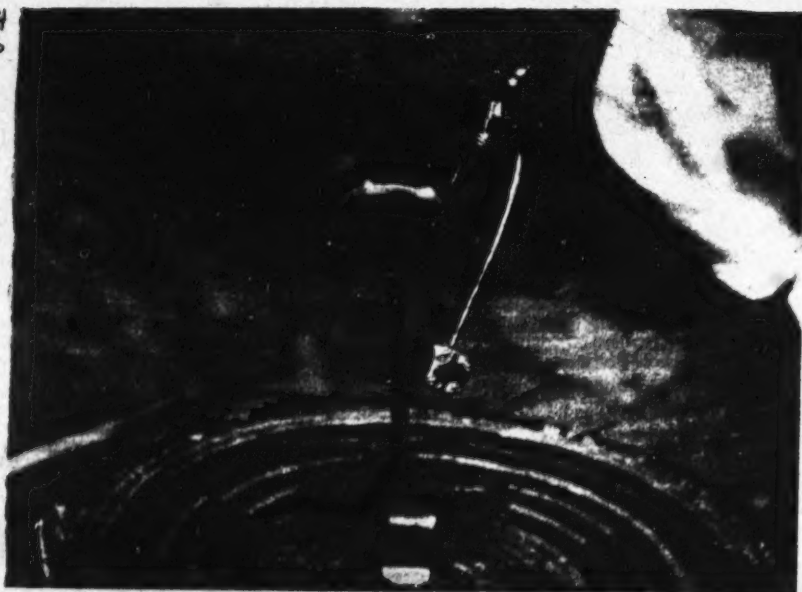
433 We can now place the two systems of industry side by side and compare their respective assets and defects. Against highly efficient co-operation and mutual assistance embodied in the guild organization we have to set the free play of competition allowed in individual crafts. Against the principle of continuity and planned training we have to set higher adaptability and larger scope for individual initiative and inventiveness. Broadly speaking, it cannot be doubted that uncontrolled, 'individualistic', industries stand a higher chance of developing production, possibly on new lines, and of achieving technical progress. Moreover, efficient training and continuity of craft knowledge can, to some extent, also be assured in the narrower form of co-operation vested in the small labour-unit; this is shown in the village groups of blacksmiths and weavers. The question which we have asked at the beginning of this section thus still stands: Why has Nupe society chosen, of these two possible methods of organizing industrial enterprise, the method that assured group efficiency and continuity on the largest scale, and group efficiency rather than progress and individual initiative?

467 The main reason lies in the political system of the country. The guilds are, as we have seen, built closely into the political framework. 466 Let me recall the main facts: the guild-head is the agent of the king in all matters concerning the group; like the members of the nobility, he is the holder of an official rank, and is admitted to the *nkó*, the King's Council. The guilds themselves enjoy a privileged position in the Nupe state in that they were exempted from tax and were assigned a social position superior to that of other commoners, peasants, or traders. Yet they were, in other respects, very much controlled; they were bound to their profession and could not freely change it. They were even bound to the locality in which they practised their trade and could not move from it without permission of the guild-head. If a village chief desired to have a certain Bida craft represented in his village, he had to apply to the guild-head in the capital; this happened some years ago in Kutigi, when the chief requested the guild-head of the carpenters in Bida to send him a craftsman to settle and practise in his village. The craftsmen, then, are the king's craftsmen. Not only are they dependent on the king for their prosperity, but they are also controlled and supervised by him and his official agent, the guild-master. This organization of the craft-guilds amounts to a full control of the political system over all the more important industries of the country. We may even go further and say that this control was dictated by the needs of the state: based on constant warfare, committed to uphold the splendour of a huge court, the political system has to guarantee a dependable, uninterrupted supply of all that is needed—arms, tools, clothes, saddles, as well as the many symbols of wealth and status. Upon this dedication of the craft-guilds to the service of the state the seal is set by the discriminative social appreciation which the Nupe people extend to the different crafts.¹ The noblest craft is that of the brass- and sword-smiths, for they, as an informant put it, are 'the makers of arms'.

¹ See p. 103.

6: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1956
 "King of the dancers" - A Bida FF52 Nupe FF52
 brass spinning Toy. Bida

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The guilds of craftsmen in iron, leather, and embroidery made the weapons, armour, saddle-cloths and accoutrements for the army, the agricultural workers produced food and the glass-makers produced the ornaments which formed a basis of trade when that seemed more worth while than a military operation. As is usual in a state drawing most of its profits from war and plunder, there grew in Bida a great demand for luxuries—ornamental vessels, beads and armlets, especially among the women. Many young men of Bida state, ruefully, that this taste lingers on.

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This guild system was too rigid easily to withstand fundamental changes. The blacksmiths, declining in number, now confine themselves to farm implements and a few furnishings for horsemen. The brass makers turn out a wide range of flat and hollow-ware, much of it coming loosely within the luxury classification. The embroiderers turn out fine hand work on gowns and there is a beautifully decorated, bright red cloth woven by the women; but few are sold outside the town. Makers of hats and mats turn out a range of products now largely aimed at a Europeanised market.

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This falling-off of the traditional demand and an (at least) partial failure to find adequate new markets has already resulted in the loss of some skills and is a grave risk to the perpetuation of many others.

The glass-makers, however, still work in their traditional way. The furnace is made from a clay pot heavily embedded in more clay. Into the base of the furnace are let two clay pipes of about two inches external diameter. These swell out to become bellows chambers some twelve or fifteen inches across closed by leather bags. One pumps away at them

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